

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
ARIZONA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS TASK FORCE**

January 25, 2007

1:30 p.m., MST

The Arizona English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force met in Room 1 of the Arizona Senate Building, 1700 W. Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona. Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. MST.

1. Call to Order

Present:

Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman
Dr. John Baracy
Mr. Jim DiCello
Dr. Eugene Garcia
Ms. Johanna Haver
Ms. Eileen Klein
Ms. Karen Merritt

Absent:

Ms. Anna Rosas
Ms. Margaret Garcia Dugan

A quorum was present for the purpose of conducting business.

2. Approval of November 30, 2006 minutes of Task Force Meetings

Mr. Alan Maguire called for the approval of the November 30, 2006 minutes. The motion was made by Mr. Jim DiCello and was seconded by Ms. Eileen Klein. The November 30, 2006 minutes were unanimously approved by the Task Force.

Dr. John Baracy asked for a progress report on his request for information from Dr. Ken Noonan. Ms. Irene Moreno said that a reminder had been sent out. The reminder will be followed up by ADE staff.

3. Presentation and discussion of demographic characteristics and assessment results of English Language Learners in Arizona

Mr. Micky Gutier, Education Program Specialist with the Office of English Language Acquisition Services, presented the demographic characteristics of English Language Learners in Arizona from the fiscal years 2004 to 2006 (Attachment A--PowerPoint). According to the home language survey data, the most common language spoken in the home of ELL students was

Spanish: 80% of ELLs reported Spanish as the primary language spoken in the home, followed by English (13%), Navajo, (3%), and Vietnamese (0.63%). In fiscal year 2004, there were 161,256 ELL students funded, in 2005 there were 154,071 and in 2006 there were 134,621 ELL students funded. These counts are taken three times during the school year: a student who was present all three dates counted as one; if a student changed schools and was present only one of the three dates, he would count as one-third. The number of students funded reflects the count made the prior year. In 2006, of those 134,621 ELL students, 84,562 (63%) were enrolled in 20 districts statewide. Cartwright district, with 8694 students, had the highest number of ELL students. Forty-two percent of ELL students funded for the 2006 fiscal year were in kindergarten through second grade.

Ms. Rolanda Bell stated that the percentage of new ELLs rose steadily from the fiscal years 2004 to 2006, from 31.6% to 35.9%. The percentage of ELLs reclassified rose sharply from 9% in 2004 to 19% in 2005, then fell somewhat in the 2006 fiscal year to 14.4%. Factors which may have contributed to the sharp rise include the law which required all educators to obtain SEI training, changes in state statutes, and increased accountability in data reporting. Dr. Eugene Garcia cautioned Ms. Bell that because multiple variables are involved (for example No Child Left Behind (NCLB), other educational policies, the SELP assessment) one cannot be certain what changed the percentages.

Mr. Gutier discussed the assessments used to classify ELLs. In the 2003-2004 school year, four instruments were used to measure English proficiency: the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT), Language Assessment Scales (LAS), Woodcock-Munoz Language Scales (WMLS), and Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery-Revised (WLPB-R). In the school years 2004-2005 and 2005-2006, the Harcourt SELP assessment was used; student SELP test results are captured in SAIS records. During the 2006-2007 school year, the state moved to an augmented SELP, the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment instrument. The data on new ELL classifications is not yet available.

Mr. Alan Maguire stated that the Task Force should be aware this data comes at the beginning of a data set, not the middle or end. The fact that there was not a large change in reclassification percentages should indicate the change in assessment was not a major factor. Dr. Garcia again cautioned that with the number of variables in the teaching environment, laying claims to a particular factor is not supported. Ms. Johanna Haver added that she had been involved in the choosing of assessments in the 2003-2004 school year and that some of the tests were very difficult. She believed that the SELP assessment was not as difficult, which might be responsible for the percentage change. Mr. Maguire stated that the percentage change was minimal, not a large anomaly, such as 30%. Mr. Gutier reminded the Task Force that the 2003-2004 assessment data was not collected directly by ADE but was self-reported by the districts, but that the 2005 and 2006 data had to match the ELL student enrollment in SAIS and was reflected on the student reports. Mr. Jim DiCello asked if the 2002-2003 reclassification percentages were higher or lower. Mr. Gutier replied that they were lower. Mr. DiCello commented that there was also an ELL incentive fund for two years, which gave classrooms who exited ELL students a bonus (H.B. 2010; 45th Legislature, Second Special Session.) In effect,

the 2004-2005 school year was the second year of the program, and there were a lot more reclassifications. Ms. Karen Merritt stated that it was difficult to get longitudinal data with the changes in assessments year to year. Ms. Bell stressed that the SELP assessment was more closely aligned to the state ELL standards than prior assessments had been. It was not necessarily easier. Ms. Irene Moreno stated that the SELP assessment had a 69% alignment to standards.

Ms. Bell then discussed the percentages of students making progress from FY 2005 to FY 2006 by grade bands: 47% of kindergarten through fifth grade ELL students made progress, 69% of sixth through eighth grade ELLs made progress, and 87% of ELLs grades 9-12 made progress. She then examined the progress by component and proficiency level. Pre-emergent students made the most progress, especially in oral language. Fifty-three percent moved up four levels of proficiency in a school year for all grades, K-12. Reading and Writing improvement percentages overall were lower. Dr. Garcia asked what this means for the entire assessment in reclassifying as overall proficient and exiting the program. Ms. Bell stated that in 2005 ADE did not collect the composite scores to obtain overall proficiency, only the scores by component. She then presented ELL performance on the Reading section of AIMS in FY 2006. No grade met the AIMS target set by ADE. Math approached but did not meet. Data on ELL students reclassified to FEP showed that at least 50% passed AIMS the first time taken.

Ms. Merritt commented that the length of time students take to reclassify seems different for the kindergarten level than the 9th-12th grade level. She asked Ms. Bell to break out the data. Ms. Bell said that she could provide the data by grade level for the Task Force. Dr. Garcia asked what the data says about the time needed to reclassify. Ms. Bell stated that the data from the AZELLA is needed to answer that question. Mr. Maguire commented that at least 50% of FEP students passing AIMS the first time was a fair percentage and that if the assessment were too easy the percentages would be much lower. Dr. Garcia stated that success would be 100% passing and wondered if it was due to a language or academic problem. Ms. Haver asked how many non-ELL students pass the AIMS and stated that a comparison would be interesting. The comparison should take into account similar demographics, including economic and location. Ms. Merritt asked for data on the eighth grade scores for students who took AIMS the second time. Ms. Bell said she could get that.

4. Discussion of Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) as a tool for assisting in modeling ELL instruction

Ms. Mariela Bean, the ELL Coordinator for Humboldt USD presented first on SIOP and the district's use of the protocol in teaching ELL students (Attachment B--PowerPoint). At Humboldt, sheltered is defined as instruction that allows ELLs to participate in specific content courses with grade-level objectives that are delivered through modified instruction that makes the content more comprehensible to students. SIOP was originally developed as a means to measure how well a teacher was providing sheltered instruction. SIOP provides a framework of components to teach students. SIOP evolved from a tool for measurement to an actual guide to teaching high-quality sheltered instruction. Ms. Bean went over the Lesson Plan Checklist for

SIOP (Attachment C) and described the various components, including Preparation, Building Background, Comprehensible Input, Strategies, Interaction, Practice/Application, Lesson Delivery, and Review/Assessment. Each component has activities associated with it, which can be chosen from a menu list by the instructor. For example, under Strategies, teachers should provide opportunities for students to use strategies such as problem solving, predicting, organizing, summarizing, categorizing, evaluating, and self-monitoring.

Arizona has made a commitment to use SIOP as a protocol which fits the needs of the state. They have found many benefits to the district by implementing SIOP. Ms. Bean cautioned against trying to fit a district into a model, rather than vice versa. HUSD is trying to standardize the semantics, as the definitions from the SIOP book may differ from the district definitions. Ms. Bean stated that Humbolt is a small district and it is a challenge to develop lesson plans for their classes that combine multiple grades and proficiency levels. She spoke of the challenge to districts in implementing a large-scale protocol like SIOP, and the stress levels which can accompany the implementation. It takes time, and a deliberate, systematic strategy to implement at a district. Perhaps future funding could be earmarked for the teacher training required for SIOP.

Next Ms. Marcy Granillo, Improvement Coordinator for Isaac Elementary School District, spoke of Isaac ESD's use of SIOP (Attachment D, PowerPoint). She co-wrote the grant to find a program that would meet the needs of the district and decided to use SIOP. SIOP is based on best practices, is research-based, and complements current methodologies and strategies for ELL students. It helps teachers form a daily lesson plan, supports the NCLB vision, and includes parental support as well.

Ms. Granillo also reviewed the SIOP components. She explained that under Preparation, language objectives could include classifying and summarizing, and she stated that real objects in the classroom are used as supplemental materials to help teach. SIOP uses visuals and hands-on activities such as graphic organizers, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, or tapes. An important element in the Building Background component is teaching the vocabulary necessary to learn the objective, and building a connection between past lessons learned to the new subject material. The Comprehensible Input component includes rate of speech and careful use of idioms which ELL students may need to have defined. Under the Strategies component, SIOP provides a menu of options, based on the understanding that teachers know what can be done in their classroom and what will work with their students. There is use of scaffolding which gives initial support and then is slowly dropped away as the student masters the objective. SIOP also uses various groupings described under Interaction, including using an increased wait time for responses for ELL students who may otherwise not respond to questions. For Lesson Delivery, Ms. Granillo used a quote from Jana Echevarria, "It's not what is taught, but how it is taught." Teachers should post objectives and pace the class as needed.

At Lela Alston Elementary School (K-3), a Title 7 grant of \$500,000 was funded for five years for professional development in increasing language proficiency. The school used the funds for a teacher coach salary and professional development courses for teachers, and focused on

training one SIOP component per quarter for a total of eight quarters. Classes were modeled, team taught, and then teachers taught on their own with peer observations as well as coach monitoring. In addition, there was video taping of classrooms and teacher self-assessments. As a result of implementing SIOP, the school noticed changes in both the coach's and teachers' teaching, more teacher excitement to use interactions in their lesson plans, and student test scores improved by 27%. They observed that it takes three to five years to see a noticeable change. Teachers are continuing to use SIOP across curriculums and there is ongoing and sustained professional development at Lela Alston.

Ms. Karen Merritt asked what years the grant was in effect. Ms. Granillo responded that the grant was in effect from 2002 to 2005, with an extension in 2005. Dr. John Baracy asked for more detail on what the grant funded. Included were the training coach, professional development, a national trainer presentation, substitutes to enable afternoon training, and specific grade-level training. There is one aide per grade to assist teachers. Dr. Baracy asked if there has been a lasting change. Ms. Granillo said there was, but that in order to sustain the change, there is an ongoing need for sustained professional development, and observations of classrooms. About half of the \$500,000 grant was spent on professional development over the five years. Mr. Baracy asked for a cost per student. Ms. Granillo said that she could get that.

Ms. Johanna Haver stated there was no scientific evidence on the success of group work, but asked if teachers had the option to use or not use groupings in their classroom. Ms. Granillo stated that groupings are just one piece, and that, for example, a teacher could group proficient students with less proficient students, but that this is only one strategy. Using this strategy can result in a noisier classroom, but this can be positive if students are practicing their language skills. Use of the native language follows the framework set by statutes, where instruction is given in English but other languages can be used for clarification purposes. Dr. Eugene Garcia stated that as SIOP was presented it was a protocol, not a prescriptive model. Ms. Granillo agreed that it is a guide, though the originators are now calling it a model. Ms. Eileen Klein asked if the parental component was essential. Ms. Granillo stated that parental involvement was part of compliance with NCLB. Twenty-six parents were selected to take a course in helping their children to read. This was not an adult educational course, merely support for the students. Ms. Haver asked the recommended class size; Ms. Granillo said 20 students in primary grades and twenty-five students in middle grades. At Lela Alston, while the grant was in effect, the class size was twenty.

5. Presentation and discussion of progress monitoring assessments

Ms. Cindy Segotta-Jones, Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Cartwright Elementary School District, presented to the Task Force on mid-course assessments used to monitor ELL students (Attachment E, PowerPoint). AZELLA is used for initial assessment and annual reassessment, but many other assessments can be given during the school year. Examples include a monthly English Language Development (ELD) assessment, quarterly Galileo benchmarks in reading and math, quarterly district writing assessment, and AIMS. There has been high success on monitoring the results of benchmark testing, which can assess if a student

has academic language. Academic language (for example "quotient", "summarize") are heavily taught so that ELL students can understand the language in assessments.

There is also a daily monitoring checklist with examples of ELL student behavior at various proficiency levels. Chairman Maguire asked if the proficiency terminology being used, pre-production, production etc. aligns (cardinal relationship) with AZELLA terminology of pre-emergent, emergent etc. Ms. Segotta-Jones said it was. This tool can be used by teachers in preparing their own exams. The important point to consider is that assessment is part of an ongoing cycle. A teacher assesses a student to know what needs to be taught, which leads to planning the lesson, teaching the lesson, and assessing if the lesson has been learned. In addition to monitoring ELLs within the program, the districts/schools monitor students who have been reclassified as Fluent English Proficient (FEP). Because the proficiency score is a composite score of Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, a FEP student may still not be proficient in each of those areas.

Mr. Jim DiCello asked who does the assessments. The district handles the oral portion of AZELLA while a language acquisitions specialist assists with the other portions. For reassessment with AZELLA, the district handles the oral and the teacher administers the rest of the test. For the ELD assessments, the ELL teachers gives the test; other subjects are given by the subject teachers.

Ms. Jean Anderson, former Curriculum Director for Phoenix Union High School District, gave a presentation on the READ 180 program (Attachment F, handout). This is an intervention program that is not specifically intended for ELL students but has shown positive outcomes for ELL students in the past and targets ninth graders in particular. READ 180 is a research-based model which loses integrity if partitioned out. The program consists of a 90-minute period with eight students per rotation, who rotate between computer, small group instruction, and independent reading.

The vocabulary element of the program has a particularly strong effect on ELL students. The computer program includes a diagnostic feature. Students can read to the computer and it evaluates their fluency. Videos prepare the students for what they will be reading about. Teachers have access to more than thirty different reports on student progress; these reports help them to adjust instruction. In addition, there are ten different reports which aggregate the data for administrators. There are also progress reports which can be sent to parents.

Ms. Anderson discussed the AIMS scores, which rose during the time of the program, comparing ELLs in the program with matching non-participants. Twenty-eight percent of ELL students not in the READ 180 program fell far below standard while only 10% of program participants fell far below. Sixty-four percent of ELL students in READ 180 were approaching the standard as opposed to only 49% of matching non-participants. Terra Nova scores were also compared in a similar fashion for 10th graders. Ms. Johanna Haver asked if all ELL students participate in the READ 180 program. Ms. Anderson replied that no, there aren't enough classrooms; there are five classrooms in ten schools for a total of fifty classrooms. About 5,000 students qualify for

the intervention, but currently they have only the capacity for 3,600. They started the program with transitional ESL students who would take one period of ESL and then two hours of READ 180, and have since found the program is also good for ELL students with advanced proficiency. Lower proficiencies are not good candidates because the program requires a fair reading level. Ms. Karen Merritt asked how many school districts have READ 180 and what the cost is per student. Ms. Anderson said she could get that, but the cost may be blended. There is a one-time purchase of materials so the first year it may be \$300/student, then the second year \$150/student and so on, so over time the cost lessens and it can be very cost efficient. The benefits are also high. Dr. Baracy asked how the program was funded. Ms. Anderson said it came from a variety of funds including Titles I, II, and V. The resources needed include staffing and support. Ms. Anderson stated that she can provide the total cost to the Task Force. Ms. Anderson was aware of the cost related to the purchase of computers (eight computers per class for fifty classrooms), and the reduction of class sizes, which increased the number of teachers.

Ms. Chris Poslosky, 7th Grade Language Arts Teacher at Isaac Middle School, made a presentation about formative assessments. In conjunction with the ELL standards, formative assessments are used to guide instruction. SIOP is one method but there are others, such as focusing on ELL standards. Assessments need to have a focus to help a teacher to get students to meet objectives. Ms. Poslosky stated that she would like to see home language assessments to assist teachers in assessing background knowledge. Her district has INFORM, which can take a snapshot of her classroom language level. A typical class may have varying levels of language including non-ELL students, continuing ELL students, and various proficiency levels. Academic language is vital, especially idioms which can apply in math as well as reading, such as using decimals for percentages, and words like "equivalent."

It is important for schools to see district data on the proficiency level of their students. There are districts that don't share this information. For example, if the entire seventh grade does poorly on functional text, the teachers can focus on this area, plan lessons around it, and retest, hopefully with better results. Another test generator is IDEAL which has a question bank for teachers to use based on lessons needing assessment. Ms. Poslosky says that SEI training has made a difference.

Ms. Norma Basolet, Yuma School District One, presented next on district assessments. Dr. John Baracy asked for clarification on whether the open meeting law has a bearing on presenters not listed on the agenda. Mr. Alan Maguire stated that as the speaker was addressing the same topic the law is being followed. Ms. Kim Anderson, from the Attorney General's office, stated that the requirement is to keep to the agenda item topic. Different speakers can speak as long as the topic is the same.

Ms. Basolet works with data and assessment and grant writing for Yuma School District One. Ms. Ursula Gray, District Assessment Coordinator, also presented on district assessments citing a packet developed for the Task Force (Attachment G). Informal assessments, formative assessments, and progress monitoring are all intertwined. The Yuma district strives to use their assessments to gather data for planning and development. The district keeps cumulative folders

and literacy folders on students. The cumulative folders are locked at the district level, and the literacy folder is open and usable by teachers to guide instruction. Yuma has an extensive assessment calendar, shown three different ways so that teachers understand what assessments need to be given at what dates. The elementary schools use DIBELS in grades 4-6 as well as in the lower grades. Most of Yuma District also uses Harcourt Trophies. They use the Spanish IPT assessment to determine if an ELL student requiring intervention needs it for language reasons. The district also uses quarterly writing assessments which work better than the previously used annual assessments. Standards for different grade levels require different writing tasks, including stories, personal, expository, or narrative, summaries, formal letters, and reports.

Ms. Basolet stated that all test scores go onto the district website and into an Excel file so that it can easily be reported. Dr. Garcia asked if the assessments are all aligned with the standards. Ms. Gray said that yes, the writing assessment, Star, SRI, and DIBELS are all aligned with the academic standards, to which the ELL standards are also aligned.

6. Call to the Public

Mr. Alan Maguire made a call to the public at 5:00pm. There was no public testimony given.

7. Discussion of future meetings

Dr. John Baracy asked about a revised schedule for the Task Force. Mr. Alan Maguire will make a revised to-do list and revised schedule. The February calendar should be available on Monday.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Jim DiCello made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Karen Merritt. The meeting adjourned at 5:09pm.

Arizona ELL Task Force

Alan Maguire, Chairman
February 23, 2007